

the  
**GREENWICH VILLAGE ORCHESTRA**  
BARBARA YAHR, MUSIC DIRECTOR

SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2017 | 3:00 PM | WASHINGTON IRVING AUDITORIUM



2016-2017

30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SEASON

# A NOTE FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

The Greenwich Village Orchestra is proud to be celebrating our milestone 30<sup>th</sup> season! For those of you who have been attending our performances for almost three decades, you have surely noticed how the orchestra has grown and evolved into the fine group of dedicated musicians you will hear today. The GVO loves rehearsing great music from the orchestral repertoire, but what we love most is performing for a live audience; that is how music comes to life. It's another way of saying that without you, it just wouldn't be any fun.

Yours,



Barbara Yahr

Music Director and Conductor

Established in 1986, the GVO is a symphony orchestra composed entirely of volunteers. By day, we are accountants, artists, attorneys, carpenters, editors, physicians, professors, programmers, psychologists, retirees, scientists, secretaries, teachers, and writers. As musicians, we are dedicated to bringing the best possible performances of great music to our audiences and are committed to serving the community while keeping our ticket prices affordable.

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The GVO operates on a lean budget — our concerts would not be possible without generous donations from our audiences and our musicians. A gift of any amount enables to the orchestra to:

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- Attract the most talented soloists performing in NYC today;
- Perform outreach concerts in hospitals and community centers;
- Develop and enhance our *Together in Music* initiative, which makes music accessible to children and families with special needs.

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Program Listing: \_\_\_\_\_

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# PROGRAM

**Sunday, March 19, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.**

Barbara Yahr, Music Director and Conductor

Robert Long, Chorus Master

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## **Aaron Copland (1900-1990)**

Fanfare for the Common Man

## **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**

Symphony No. 9

I. Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso

II. Scherzo: Molto vivace - Presto

III. Adagio molto e cantabile

IV. Presto

*Rachel Rosales, soprano*

*Jan Wilson, mezzo-soprano*

*John Tiranno, tenor*

*Peter Stewart, baritone*

*Ars Musica Chorale, Dusty Francis | Music Director*

*Brooklyn Conservatory Chorale, Nelly Vuksic | Chorale Director*

*Seraphim, Robert Long | Conductor*

### **PLEASE VISIT OUR SILENT AUCTION**

Check out the silent auction in the lobby after today's concert! Vendors from around the neighborhood have donated wonderful auction items to support the orchestra as we continue the celebration of our 30th Season!

*Auction Lots on Back of Program*

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This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

Flash photography is not permitted during the performance.



# NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN - SYMPHONY NO. 9

The claim is often made that Beethoven's ninth symphony is the most popular piece of classical music in the world. The truth of this assertion is probably debatable — after all, it's difficult to assemble all the musical forces needed to present it in concert, so performances aren't all that common. As for recordings...well, it's hardly the kind of music we'd keep playing in the background as we do household chores. "Revered" may be a better word choice. The Ninth occupies a unique place in global culture and in the popular imagination. In a world in which we strive to appreciate diversity, the Ninth symbolizes something universal: the human aspiration to be free.

This widespread acceptance has kept the Ninth fresh. Other 19th-century European symphonies can find themselves in a ghetto of artistic refinement — an "imaginary museum of musical works," in the telling phrase of esthetic philosopher Lydia Goehr. But Beethoven's Ninth has continuing relevance for all Americans, not just classical music fans. Why? Because it has bridged the divide between pop culture and the highbrow stuff like no other single work of art.

In America, where the divide between mass culture and high art is extreme, the Ninth lies on the far side of the divide. On the other hand, the celebration of human freedom is so basic to our national ideals that we value Beethoven as one of our own. And he was the most prominent classical composer to "go rogue," reinventing a familiar form in a heroic new way with the Symphony No. 9. We appreciate that kind of daring and inventiveness, and we see a Promethean sacrifice in the way Beethoven suffered and pushed himself to transmute the symphony's formally abstract structure into a philosophical statement. Beethoven may have been dark, brooding and Germanic, but he appeals to us with bold directness in this symphony.

The mythic status of Beethoven's Ninth encompasses some misconceptions, but correcting them does nothing to diminish its greatness. Perhaps the most dramatic of these is the notion that Beethoven's deafness tragically prevented him from understanding the extent of his triumph. The symphony's premiere on May 7, 1824, was one of those rare musical events that seems to have been fully appreciated by its audience. Reports of listeners' enthusiasm for the bold new work suggest that on that historic Friday evening, with nearly a thousand in attendance, there was a collective understanding of their profound, shared experience, with Beethoven fully acknowledged by the cheering crowd. While music-class accounts of the premiere sometimes depict an oblivious Beethoven conducting the orchestra in his head after the real instrumentalists had stopped playing, it is far more likely

he was indicating his preferred tempos and gesturing expressively in a manner that did not depend upon precise cues.

According to one account, the contralto soloist, Caroline Unger, approached the unhearing Beethoven at the end of the symphony while he was still beating time. But this gesture was far from pathetic, as Unger showed him the cheering crowd of listeners, “The public received the musical hero with the utmost respect and sympathy, listened to his wonderful, gigantic creations with the most absorbed attention and broke out in jubilant applause, often during sections, and repeatedly at the end of them,” according to a violinist in the orchestra. According to this account, these interruptions included repeated standing ovations, perhaps as many as five, and the waving of handkerchiefs and hats, all intended to make clear to Beethoven that his monumental symphony was enthusiastically received.

Still another widely accepted misconception about the Ninth depicts it as a lone, valedictory statement, the culmination of Beethoven’s career as a composer. Enthusiasts know that Beethoven’s development is generally divided into three periods, with the works of his late period being the most complex in their combination of philosophy and melody, and the most formally challenging. This view nicely supports the notion of a “curse of the Ninth,” which holds that neither Beethoven nor any symphonist who came after him could write anything to carry the symphonic tradition beyond so monumental a work; indeed, while writing dozens or even hundreds of symphonies was the norm for great composers who preceded him (Haydn wrote 104), those who came after Beethoven seemed to hit a wall with their ninth symphony, and some — for example, Brahms — wondered how they could even dare to bring a single new symphony into a world where Beethoven’s Ninth already existed.

Beethoven read the great philosophers of his era from the time he was young, and he was preoccupied with Enlightenment ideals and the problem of human freedom throughout his life. He made freedom and political oppression it the focus of his sole opera, *Fidelio*, and of his earlier *Symphony No. 3, the Eroica*. He famously dedicated this symphony to Napoleon, whom he first saw as a liberator, and then “undedicated” it after coming to regard him as just another oppressor.

One popular notion confirmed by the Ninth’s development is Beethoven’s reputation for long, agonized periods of creative germination and revision. He was influenced by the poetry of Schiller from a young age, and as early as 1793, when he was only 22, he began to consider the idea of basing a major composition on the poet’s *Ode to Joy*; it also seems likely that some piano sonatas of his early period, including the beloved *Pathétique* (dating from 1799), were inspired by Schiller essays.

Beethoven’s idea of including the voice in a symphony also dates from this period, but

# NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

may not originally have attached to the Ninth. In a sketchbook dated 1811 he envisions a cantata combining choral and instrumental movements based on the Ode. The Beethoven biographer Alexander Thayer describes how, in 1822, while visiting a music critic in Leipzig, the composer described plans for a tenth symphony that would include vocal elements that would “enter gradually — in the text of the Adagio Greek Myth, Cantique Ecclesiastique — in Allegro, the feast of Bacchus.”

The symphony's breakthrough fourth movement takes a form that no composer had ever before imagined: a symphonic chorale with full chorus and soloists joining forces to sing Friedrich Schiller's ecstatic Ode to Joy. This movement is the culmination of a meditation on brotherhood that spans the entire symphony, and it is the whole world's hymn to freedom.

## Friedrich Schiller, Ode to Joy

O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!  
Sondern lasst uns angenehmere anstimmen,  
Freude, schöner Götterfunken,  
Tochter aus Elysium,  
Wir betreten feuertrunken,  
Himmlische, dein Heiligtum.  
Deine Zauber binden wieder  
Was die Mode streng geteilt,  
Alle Menschen werden Brüder  
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.  
Wem der grosse Wurf gelungen,  
Eines Freundes Freund zu sein,  
Wer ein holdes Weib errungen,  
Mische seinen Jubel ein!  
Ja, wer auch nur eine Seele  
Sein nennt auf der Erden rund!  
Und wer's nie gekonnt, der stehle  
Weinend sich aus diesem Bund.  
Freude trinken alle Wesen  
An den Brüsten der Natur,  
Alle Guten, alle Bösen  
Folgen ihrer Rosenspur.  
Küsse gab sie uns und Reben,  
Einen Freund, geprüft im Tod,  
Wollust ward dem Wurm gegeben,  
Und der Cherub steht vor Gott.  
Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen  
Durch des Himmels prächt'gen Plan,

Laufet, Brüder, eure Bahn,  
Freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen.  
Seid umschlungen, Millionen!  
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!  
Brüder -- überm Sternenzelt  
MusseinlieberVaterwohnen.  
Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen?  
Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt?  
Such ihn überm Sternenzelt,  
Über Sternen muss er wohnen.

O friends, not these sounds! Let us sing more  
pleasant and more joy-  
ful ones instead!  
Joy, beautiful divine spark,  
daughter from Paradise,  
We enter, drunk with fire,  
Heavenly One, into your sanctuary.  
Your magic reunites what daily life  
Has rigorously kept apart,  
All men become brothers  
Wherever your gentle wings abide.  
Anyone who has been greatly fortunate  
To be a true friend to a friend,  
Each man who has found a gracious wife,  
Should rejoice with us!  
Yes, anyone who can claim but a single soul  
As his or her own in all the world!

But anyone who has known none of this, must  
steal away,  
Weeping, from our company.  
All beings drink of Joy  
At Nature's breasts,  
All good creatures, all evil creatures  
Follow her rosy path.  
She has given us kisses and vines,  
A friend loyal unto death,  
Pleasure has been given to the worm,  
And the angel stands before God.  
Happily, as his suns fly

Across the sky's magnificent expanse,  
Hurry, brothers, along your path,  
Joyfully, like a hero to the conquest.  
Be embraced, you millions!  
This kiss for the entire world!  
Brothers — beyond the starry canopy  
A loving Father must dwell.  
Do you fall on your knees, you millions?  
Do you sense the Creator, world?  
Seek Him above the starry canopy,  
Beyond the stars must He dwell.

Beethoven's Ninth is big in its dimensions as well as its ideas. Over the course of an hour, we are transported from esthetic contemplation to a realm where the abstract beauty of music amplifies the beauty of philosophical ideas. The opening creates an unsettled feeling. Beethoven follows by inverting the traditional movement order, placing a scherzo in second position. The dithering, bouncing pace of this movement gives the impression of the random, jagged disorder of human activity, providing an earthly context for the transcendence of the final, choral movement. The third movement, a sublime adagio, provides the contemplative introduction for the momentous choral movement to follow.

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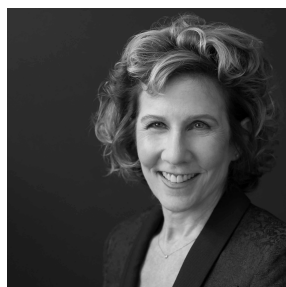
# ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

## BARBARA YAHR

Now in her fifteenth season with the GVO, Music Director Barbara Yahr continues to lead the orchestra to new levels of distinction. Under Barbara's baton, the GVO has grown into an innovative, collaborative institution offering a rich and varied season of classical music to our local community.

A native of New York, Ms.Yahr's career has spanned from the United States to Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Her previous posts include Principal Guest Conductor of the Munich Radio Orchestra, Resident Staff Conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony under Maestro Lorin Maazel and Music Director of the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra. She has appeared as a guest conductor with such orchestras as the Bayerische Rundfunk, Dusseldorf Symphoniker, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie, Frankfurt Radio, Orchestra Sinfonica Siciliana, Janacek Philharmonic, New Japan Philharmonic, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony, and the National Symphony in Washington D.C. She has also conducted orchestras throughout the United States. Most recently, she has coached the actors on the set of the Amazon Series, *Mozart in the Jungle*.

She holds a Bachelor's degree in Conducting from the Curtis Institute of Music where she studied with Max Rudolf and an MM in Music Theory from the Manhattan School of Music. She was a student of Charles Bruck at the Pierre Monteux School in Hancock, Maine. A central focus of Ms.Yahr's career has been her commitment to finding new ways to reach a broader population with music. This path ultimately led her to pursuing an MA in Music Therapy at NYU and training at the Nordoff-Robbins Center for Music Therapy in NYC. Her pioneering, community music therapy project, Together in Music, brings orchestral music to the special needs community with uniquely interactive programs presented annually by the GVO. Barbara is married to Dr. Alexander Lerman and has two adult step children, Abe and Dania, and a 14 year old son, Ben.



## RACHEL ROSALES

Blessed with a sumptuous voice of magnificent proportions, soprano Rachel Rosales is capable of delivering the fiery intensity of Verdi to the delicate filigree of Handel and has achieved popular and critical acclaim in opera, oratorio and solo recital. She has performed as a soloist in major New York concert venues from Lincoln Center to Carnegie Hall with New York City Opera, New York Philharmonic, American Symphony Orchestra, Musica Sacra, the Orpheus Orchestra, Sacred Music in a Sacred Space, Orchestra of St. Luke's, Oratorio Society of New York, Voices of Ascension, American Virtuosi/Baroque Opera Theatre, New York Collegium, Little Orchestra Society of New York, The New York Choral Society.



## JAN WILSON

Acclaimed for her “deeply moving” artistry and a “rich and colorful” voice, mezzo-soprano Jan Wilson is known for her interpretations of solo orchestral works, choral masterpieces and chamber music. She has performed with orchestras and choral societies across the US, including the orchestras of Pittsburgh, Syracuse, Richmond, West Virginia, Roanoke, Greenwich Village, Wheeling, Cedar Rapids, Northeastern PA, and at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York’s St. Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra, ARS Musica, and the State College Choral Society. A Regional Finalist and District winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, she made her debut solo recital at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in 1994 and her solo debut at Carnegie Hall’s Stern Auditorium in 2006.



## JOHN TIRANNO

Tenor John Tiranno has had his singing called “ardent and mellifluous” by The New York Times. Notable past performances include Berlioz’s *Requiem* (La Jolla Symphony & Chorus), Mahler’s *Symphony No. 8* and Paul Moravec’s *The Blizzard Voices* (Oratorio Society of New York), Richard Strauss’ *Deutsche Motette* (Musica Sacra), Saint-Saëns *Requiem* (Festival Internazionale di Musica e Arte Sacra), creating the role Trouble in Gisle Kverndokk’s *Max and Moritz* (New York Opera Society), Bach’s *B min or Mass* and the U.S. premiere of Juraj Filas’ *Oratio Spei – Requiem* (Sacred Music in a Sacred Space), Handel’s *Messiah* (Dayton Philharmonic), and recitals at King Abdullah University of Science & Technology in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. [www.johntiranno.com](http://www.johntiranno.com)



## PETER STEWART

Baritone Peter Stewart has created many new works in collaboration with composers. He has toured extensively in Europe, Australia, Asia, and North America with Philip Glass and Robert Wilson in *Einstein on the Beach*, *Monsters of Grace*, *The White Raven*, and *La Belle et la Bete*, and has joined the Philip Glass Ensemble at the keyboards in *Koyaanisqatsi*, *Powaqqatsi*, and *Anima Mundi*. Mr. Stewart has also created roles and recorded many new operas for Gavin Bryars/Robert Wilson, Julius Hemphill, Anthony Braxton, Meredith Monk, Fred Ho, Harry Partch and Hans Werner Henze, among others.



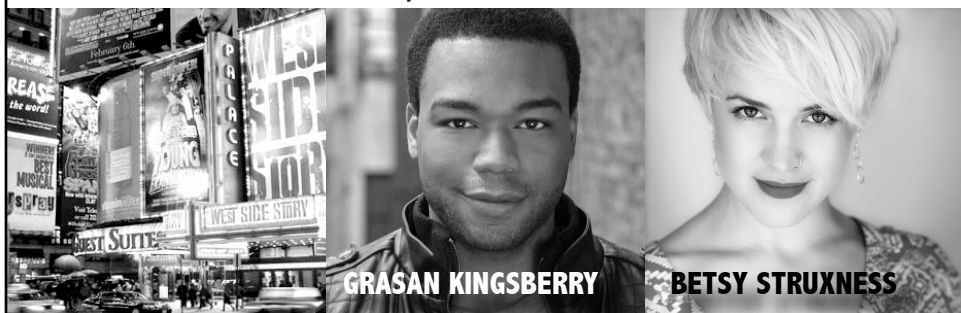
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BARBARA YAHR, CONDUCTOR

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